

Media Release

Easy method to measure appliance electricity use now available to conservation-minded residents

Horizon Utilities and libraries team up to lend “Watt Reader” devices

January 20, 2006 (Hamilton/St. Catharines) --- You can now find out how much it costs to run a window air conditioner or that old refrigerator in the basement.

Horizon Utilities is offering devices in partnership with the library systems in Hamilton and St. Catharines to measure appliance electricity loads. The “Watt Reader” lending program offers a simple and expense-free way for residents to see the amount of electricity used by 120V plug-in appliances throughout the home. These devices will be available at all 24 locations of the Hamilton Public Library system on Monday, January 23 and are currently available at the St. Catharines Central Library on Church Street.

“If you are looking for ways to reduce your electricity consumption and lower your energy costs, the Watt Reader is a good tool to help you do that,” said Brian Smith, Horizon’s Manager of Energy Conservation and Demand Management. “By measuring how much electricity it takes to operate individual electrical devices in your home, you can make informed decisions about how to conserve energy or perhaps determine which appliances should be replaced with newer, high-efficiency models.”

“We are pleased to make this free tool available to the community,” says Maureen Sawa, Director of Public Service and Community Development, Hamilton Public Library. “The library is often a first stop for information seekers. We have expert staff and a wide selection of resources on the topic of energy conservation. Watt Readers are a great addition to our library collection, and they are easy to borrow. All you need is a free library card.”

Residents borrowing a “Watt Reader” from the library will receive simple operating instructions with the unit and information on how to calculate the cost of using any appliance based on the reading on the device and the amount of time that it might be used each month. They will also receive an energy conservation booklet containing hundreds of ways to conserve energy. Detailed information on energy conservation and an energy calculator is available at www.powerWISE.ca.

A Horizon Utilities representative will be on-site at the Central Library (55 York Boulevard) on Monday, January 23 and Tuesday, January 24 to answer questions about the Watt Reader program. Free energy-efficient light bulbs will be distributed to the public.

The “Watt Reader” lending program is just one of a series of energy conservation and demand management initiatives that Horizon Utilities Corporation has launched under the powerWISE® name in cooperation with Enersource Hydro Mississauga, Hydro Ottawa Limited, PowerStream Inc., Toronto Hydro-Electric Limited and Veridian Connections. The six electricity distribution companies represent 1.65 million customers. Horizon Utilities serves more than 228,000 residential and business customers in the Cities of Hamilton and St. Catharines.

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